"Nobly Planned."

BY M. B. MANWELL, AUTHOR OF "THE BENTS OF BATTERSBY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

A MINISTERING ANGEL.

IT was visiting day in one of the great London hospitals. Here and there, beside the various sick-beds in the men's wards, were enacted touching little home episodes. But to one lonely bed no eager, loving visitor had come. Its occupant was a man who had been brought in late one night, spent from loss of blood — an attempted suicide it was supposed, as he had been found unconscious on the floor of a wretched lodging-house room. The sufferer was carried off to the nearest hospital, and oddly enough, on his pockets being searched, the patient was found to be a cousin of the house - surgeon himself.

"John Ponsonby, by all that's astounding!" ejaculated the amazed doctor. It was, in truth, the bank manager from Albury, who, in the struggle to deprive Geoff Cleeve of his murderous weapon, had himself been shot. The case was a tedious, not a dangerous one, and the house - surgeon naturally took an intense interest in the patient. Until it was deemed safe to move him into a private room, the sufferer was kept in the men's ward. On the first visiting day John Ponsonby entertained himself quietly, watching the strange life going on around. The afternoon was waning, and he was beginning to feel an eerie sense of loneliness. There was nobody, it seemed, to come seeking tidings of *his* welfare. Was there not?

Suddenly a soft whispering voice sent his pulses madly beating.

"How did you know, darling, where to find me?" whispered John.

"Nell! my Nell!" he cried, twisting himself round to meet the wistful eyes he loved. Yes, it was Nell, whose little hand he clasped in his!

"I came to see——" the agitated girl sobbed under her breath. "I came to tell you——"

"My darling, you *are* come; that's all it matters to me!" said John Ponsonby, and a wave of love-light flooded his face. "Oh, Nell," he went on, "can you ever forgive me? I'm tied down here like a log, or I should be on my knees praying your pardon."

"But it is you —who must forgive," began Nell, breathlessly. Then, breaking down, she sobbed again. "If Geoff had killed you!" Her hot tears fell on John Ponsonby's hands, and he shivered through all his being, but it was a shiver of joy. His Nell was weeping for him! Forgetting his surroundings, he tried to draw the girl closer, while he whispered tenderly, "I'd go through it over again for this sweet moment, dearest!"

Presently, when Nell grew calmer, the two talked in undertones.

"How did you know, darling, where to find me?" whispered John tenderly, holding tighter the soft hands.

"From Geoff," was the low reply. "We have found Geoff. Daisy did. She's so good, so clever. Nobody knows it but us two—and now *you!*" The girl's shy words sank still lower, but John's greedy ears caught them.

"Where is the young scoundrel?" demanded John. Each moment he was mending; he felt himself again. Nell drew her brows together in pain.

"I must not tell," she said. "I know you have cause to call him that; but, if you had seen him—our Geoff—he was starving literally, and so ill!" Trembling from head to foot, Nell again broke down. "When he found what he had done—shot you instead of himself—he fled. It was wrong, I know, but Geoff was always weak, and the awful terror of being caught prompted him. He was prostrated with illness when Daisy found him—she will not tell me how—but he is better now. And his first thought was of you. Geoff is not all bad; you must not think so. He is maddened when he thinks what he has done to you. It was himself he meant to——"

"Hush! It is not for you to know of such things. I cannot have you speak of them." John Ponsonby spoke with a new air of proprietorship, which raised a faint blush in his listener's white cheeks.

"It was to satisfy him that I came to-day; to be able to tell him that you really live—that I had seen you. Now I must go."

"Go!" echoed John. "Leave me here! Nell, dearest, doesn't your heart tell you that you belong to me now? God knows, I little deserve it after my mad doubts of your truth. But, Nell, I see it shining in your dear eyes that you love me just a little."

A wave of red swept over Nell's face, and, ebbing away, left it snow-white.

"Geoff needs me most!" The girl spoke quietly, and, rising, she drew her hands from John's clasp. In another moment she was gone. She had flitted out of the ward, and John Ponsonby lay in a frenzy, helpless to follow her.

"Old man," he said, excitedly, that evening, when the house-surgeon came his rounds, "I must get out of this at once. Can't you patch me up somehow?"

"Here's a pretty pulse!" The surgeon softly whistled. "Why, Ponsonby, what have you been doing? We'd better get him into a private room," he observed to the demure nurse at his elbow.

No sooner said than done, and from that hour John Ponsonby made haste to mend.

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While John Ponsonby rapidly attained convalescence, his heart beating high over the happiness he believed awaited him, Geoff Cleeve oscillated between life and death. Some days he was so low that his watchers held their breath. To nurse him Nell had given up her situation at the stationer's shop, where Daisy undertook her friend's daily duties to keep the place open until Geoff grew better—or worse.

So the days dragged on. Every evening when the shutters were up, Daisy stole to the wretched lodging where Nell watched over the sufferer. With a self-renunciation of which only a woman is capable, Daisy neither by word nor look showed that Geoff was anything to her save Nell's brother. It was a bitter trial to stand by his bed, gazing at his anguish, with hands down-hanging by her side, helpless to minister to one who must be as a stranger. But Daisy Rivers conquered herself, and meekly brought Nell the week's wages that she worked as her substitute to win. These wages were all the brother and sister had to live on, or, in Nell's case, to starve on. If it had not been for the various everyday necessities that Daisy quietly slipped into the cupboard, it would have been like Mother Hubbard's, bare indeed. It was all Daisy could do, and eagerly she spent her modest store of shillings.

"He's mending!" at last cried Nell, joyfully.

Daisy saw that it was so, and silently thanked God. But her visits grew fewer. As he crept back to life it seemed as though all things were blotted out to Geoff but the horror of one fact—that he had so nearly taken the life of a fellow-creature.

"No, no! He's not dead, I tell you! He is doing well!" again and again had Nell to pacify Geoff.

"Thank God!" again and again was Geoff's grateful cry. "What do you suppose he will do, Nell?" asked he, anxiously, the first day on which he was well enough to be lifted from his bed. "Have me arrested and tried for attempted murder?"

"No! Oh, Geoff, you don't know—how should you? but he is the best of all men. He will never even tell, for my sake—I mean, oh, Geoff, you are safe in John Ponsonby's hands!"

"I don't know," muttered Geoff, uneasily. "But, Nell, if God would pardon me this once, and if the man I nearly murdered would forgive me also, there's something in me that says I could rise out of the horrors of my sinful past, and be an honest man!"

"And you shall, dear old Geoff!" sobbed Nell. "You and I know that God can and does save 'to the uttermost.' And I know that John Ponsonby will also forgive."

"If so, I'll rise from this sick-bed to live a new life—God helping me!"

"Yes! it can only be by God helping you, Geoff! And, listen, dear, I make a vow here now, that, God helping *me*, I'll take my stand beside you, never deserting you until your feet are fixed firm in the right way. Don't, Geoff! don't, dear!" Nell threw herself on her knees, and kissed Geoff's clasped hands, on which the large tear-drops splashed down, the bitter outcome of a man's weakness.

"You must not be sacrificed for me, Nell!" he whispered faintly.

But the brother and sister were all things to each other in "the day of trouble" which followed Nell's firm resolve to surrender herself that she might help Geoff to redeem the past, fight the present, and win the future.

"But you belong to me, Nell!" when he had found out the pair, through Daisy Rivers, John Ponsonby indignantly insisted. He was hale and sound once again, eagerly desiring to make up by a life-devotion for those doubts which were an undying shame to remember.

"You must not tempt me to be selfish!" quietly rejoined Nell; then a vivid blush dyed her sweet face at her own admission. It would be self-pleasing to yield, and therefore selfish. "I shall never leave Geoff until he can walk alone. It will be a hard battle for him—an impossible one, were he left to himself. No, you must not ask me!" But John Ponsonby never ceased to plead all through the dreary year that followed—the year that saw Geoff, stumbling and groping towards the light, elbowed onwards and upwards by the "ministering angel" at his side.

Many a time Geoff slipped, and would have fallen, never to rise, but for the cheery, loving help that never failed in his need.

They lived together, Nell and Geoff, in a cheap lodging. Each had their daily work, he as well as she. Thanks to John Ponsonby, Geoff had got a situation, and his earnings, with Nell's combined, kept the wolf from the door of the little home.

And they were not unhappy, this struggling pair. John Ponsonby, their constant visitor, often felt he had left behind him all the joy this earth could give in the humble lodging which Nell's presence made a refined home. Would the day never come for him likewise to realise the meaning of home?

CHAPTER XII.

WEDDING BELLS.

SEED-TIME and harvest have repeated themselves with Nature's clock-work punctuality. Such a lavish summer as even the oldest inhabitant could not remember had come with that law of compensation which is so never-failing, if we could but trust in it. The previous year saw the ruin of many a fair English homestead besides those on which the Cleeves of the Round House depended for bread. The present witnessed their rehabilitation. It was as the "clear shining after rain."

"Yes, things are looking up," was Lawyer Smythe's comment, as he once again gathered in the rents of the two farms belonging to his clients, the young Cleeves.

"I shouldn't wonder if the Cleeves were not in the Round House before the year's out," predicted comfortable Mrs. Smythe, with motherly satisfaction.

"How many, do you suppose, there will be to come back?" asked the lawyer, quizzically.

"Why, Nell and Geoff," briskly put in Katie, still Katie Smythe, but cherishing certain secret hopes that had filled the void of her unrequited fancy for Geoff Cleeve. "Barbara is a great lady now, and little Anne will be our Teddy's wife before Christmas."

"Yes, yes!" said Teddy's mother contentedly. "What a thing for the dear boy it has been! Such an escape he had of that stuck-up Barbara, who, with her airs and graces, would have been no wife for him. Anne, now, is a thrifty little cricket—just the girl for dear Teddy, who wants stirring up."

"It isn't all plain sailing, however," resumed the lawyer. He was in a communicative mood. "One of the farms, spite of the good harvest, will soon be vacated—the Hill Farm. The tenant is determined to try his luck in Australia."

"Then you'll have the Hill Farm on your hands. That's dismal news for the Cleeves," said Mrs. Smythe.

"It is. But Geoff has turned over a new leaf in earnest. He is doing good, steady work, backed up by that sister of his. As for her, all I can say is, the girl's an angel down to the ground. She has made a new man of Geoff, God bless her!" said the lawyer, reverently.

But there were other things in store for Geoff Cleeve after the hard grind of his year of probation. When the Hill Farm came into the market, John Ponsonby, who with his cousin, the house-surgeon, had unexpectedly fallen into a fat legacy a-piece, offered himself as its tenant.

"Give up banking and take to farming! The man's crazed!" Brimsby held up its hands in amaze.

But when it was found that the banker intended putting in a manager to farm the land, the village signified its relief and its approval. John Ponsonby had a world of business on his hands in the hopeful spring days that followed. The Round House had been empty all winter. The aspiring tradesman's wife had found the village intolerably narrow after the fuller life of Albury town, and her spouse had fallen out of health. The idleness of the "retired" state had proved unbearable to the man whom business had shaped into a human wheel always on the move. The couple, mutually pining for their old, cheery life, agreed to return to it.

"I'll take the Round House myself," eagerly proposed the banker.

"You!" rejoined the incredulous lawyer. "Why, man, what would you do with it? You've a decent house at the Albury bank; what on earth would bring you out here to live? You'd want a horse and trap to take you to and fro every day. And it would be uncommon lonely, I can tell you, to live in the Round House."

"I don't think it would be lonely," musingly said John Ponsonby, a dreamy smile playing round his lips, and brightening his honest brown eyes. Perhaps his imagination called up a slim young figure with a fair, earnest-eyed face going about "her household ways" in the old home of the Cleeves.

"It is my opinion Ponsonby is a little off his head since he fell into that thumping legacy," said Teddy Smythe to "Anne of Cleves," whom he had won as his promised wife. Many a heart is caught on the rebound, and, sometimes, second love proves more lasting than first. It was so in the case of Teddy Smythe, who, in his devotion to the doll-like Anne, had already forgotten that he had once counted the world well lost for love of Anne's beautiful sister Barbara.

"You may call him crazed, Teddy, but I don't." Anne nodded her head sagaciously. "I can see through most millstones, and I can read John Ponsonby like an open book."

"I believe you can," admiringly agreed Teddy. "You know everything, and can do everything. Now, all I know is, that I'm uncommon lucky to get you for a wife. I don't deserve it."

"I am the best judge as to whether you deserve it or not," loftily said "Anne of Cleves." Then, as usual, the lovers relapsed into their customary mutual adulation converse.

Their wedding-day was fixed, and approaching rapidly. Little Anne had vacated the niche in the Parsonage to take up her abode with Miss Morley, from whose house she was to be married. It was the second Cleeve wedding that had taken place, but Brimsby had been cheated out of the first—that of Barbara with Sir James Standring, which had been a smart function in a fashionable London church.

To do the new Lady Standring justice, she had insisted on her young sister being married from the stately home of which she had become mistress. But Anne had a will of her own, and the small person decided to be married in that state of life with which she was contented to belong.

"We shall begin as we mean to go on!" she announced firmly. "Teddy and I don't want to push

in where we are not wanted. You know as well as I do, Barbara, that old Lady Standring and the rest of the family are mad with you for entrapping Sir James."

"How dare you! I declare you are more audacious than ever, Anne!" hotly said her ladyship. But the flush that had risen did not die away from her cheeks at once. Barbara recognised, and was stung by, the disagreeable truth hit on the head by her sharp-sighted young sister. In spite of all her new grandeur and possessions, it rankled in Barbara's heart that she was looked on as an outsider—as one not born "in the purple." For her elderly husband she had no feeling save contempt; she did not scruple to show him that she had married him simply for his worldly belongings and position. But already these things were, for Lady Standring, becoming as the apples of Sodom; she could taste the dust within. It was, however, some pleasure to throw herself into the work of providing a trousseau and plenishing for little Anne. That, at least, she could do, and a delightful campaign of shopping occupied her.

It was a gay wedding, that of "Anne of Cleves." All Brimsby shared in its festivities. After the little bride in her pink and white fairness, her snowy robes, and her blushes, the most conspicuous personage at the wedding was Lady Standring, more beauteous than ever in a Parisian costume which was a dream of magnificence. Barbara was in her most gracious mood, and enjoyed to the uttermost the profound sensation her presence created. Possibly it was her splendid appearance that overshadowed two shrinking figures who chose their seats in the darkest corner of the village church. Nell and Geoff had left their work to come and see little Anne married, but both were shy of Brimsby folk—Nell for Geoff's sake, and Geoff for his own.

"You'd better go in with the rest, dear," urged Geoff; "I can slip in anywhere out of sight."

It would hardly have been Nell had she done so. She was not ashamed of the task she had deliberately chosen—the helping of a soul struggling "out of the mire."

At sight of her sweet, brave face close to Geoff's shoulder, Barbara's haughty stare melted into an eager embrace.

"Nell, dear old Nell, why have you done this? Why have you thrown yourself away?" she whispered; but her ladyship's blue eyes never so much as rested on the downcast face of Geoff. Not yet, if ever, could Barbara pardon the shame and disgrace he had brought on the Cleeve name.

By-and-by, when the day's festivities were at an end, and Miss Morley was fervently thanking "her stars" that the event was over, John Ponsonby and Nell paced up and down the shrubbery of Miss Morley's neighbour, Mrs. Iremonger. The gentle soul had insistently drawn, with loving hands, the brother and sister into her home.

"For one night, only one," they had agreed; adding, "We, both of us, are bread-winners, and time is money."

It was John's opportunity, and long and earnestly he pleaded until he won Nell's shy promise to be his wife. In truth, she could not well hold out when she knew that the new manager of the farm John Ponsonby had taken was to be none other than Geoff Cleeve.

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When the long June days in their lavish beauty came to make this world an earthly Paradise, yet another wedding took place in Brimsby. The last of good Uncle Phil's nieces, and the sweetest, stood a happy bride before the altar, and the bridegroom by her side was John Ponsonby, justly exulting that he had indeed won for his wife—

"A perfect woman, nobly planned."

"And to think that one of the Cleeve girls should be mistress of the Round House, after all!" said the much gratified Brimsby.

"Meantime, yes!" spoke up a voice. "But you all saw Geoff Cleeve to-day when he stood up to give away the bride. He is a new man, and if he continue to walk as straight, the day is not far distant when he will take possession of his own. Then Geoff's next step will be to set his own wife to reign over the dear old Round House."

Somebody, a stranger to Brimsby, a shy girl, with copper-tinted hair, who had come down from London to be Nell's bridesmaid, overheard the gossips' predictions, and the love-light leaped into her quiet eyes. Who can say what the future was holding in its golden heart? Holding for herself and for one other who, having fought a brave fight with his own weak, sinful nature and conquered, will be enabled to ask Daisy Rivers to share it with him.

THE END.

*** *The opening chapters of a deeply interesting* NEW SERIAL STORY *by* EDITH C. KENYON, *entitled* "FOR RICHER FOR POORER," *will appear in our next number. A very charming series of pictures has been specially drawn for this story by* WILLIAM RAINEY, R.I.

LOVING WORDS.

A LOVING word is always a safe word. It may, or it may not, be a helpful word to the one who hears it; but it is sure to be a pleasant memory to the one who speaks it. Many a word spoken by us is afterwards regretted; but no word of affectionate appreciation to which we have given utterance finds a place among our sadly remembered expressions. Looking back over our intercourse with a dead friend or fellow worker, we may, indeed, regret that we were ever betrayed into a harsh or hasty or unloving word of censure or criticism in that intercourse; and we may wish vainly that we had now the privilege of saying all the loving words that we might honestly have spoken while she was yet with us. But there will never come into our hearts at such moments a single pang of regret over any word of impulsive or deliberate affection which passed our lips at any time.

We have reason to be on our guard in our speech in most directions, but we can be fearlessly free in our loving utterances. Apart from any question of the good we do to others by our words of love, we are personally the gainers, now and hereafter, by every such word which we utter; whilst we are sure to be the losers by every such word which we have failed to speak.

SUNNY HOURS.

BY MARGARET SCOTT HAYCRAFT.

O CLOUDLESS childhood, time of light!
When morning rays are golden-bright,
When love surrounds the shining way,
And summer gladness fills the day.

How oft remembrance backward turns!
How oft the heart so fondly yearns
For sunshine round our childhood cast,
And tender faces of the past!

But still the beauteous flow'rets spring,
And still the birds so gaily sing;
Earth is enrobed in radiant dress,
By His great love, Who lives to bless.

The days of childhood pass and fade,
But God endures, our changeless Aid;
"I live for evermore," He saith—
Who as a mother comforteth.

CROTCHETY CHILDREN.

BY A SUPERANNUATED GOVERNESS.

II.—THE SULKY CHILD.

HE isn't a pleasant sort of fellow, is he?—not at all like the passionate children, who have, as a rule, such generous, loving hearts that one is bound to forgive them the moment they show sorrow. Can't you imagine the apostle Peter as a child—hot-tempered, impulsive, generous-hearted, and with a keen sense of justice? How easily we can understand his developing into the enthusiastic disciple! Always first to speak, always first to avow his faith; then, when temptation came, yielding so easily, even to cursing and swearing. Yet he needed no word to reprove him; one reproachful look from his dear Master was enough to make him go and cry his heart out over his misdeeds. Yes, we can love a Peter with a different kind of love from that which we can give to a John; we feel that he is so thoroughly one of us.

One can imagine, on the other hand, that poor Judas must have been a sulky child. Here let me say, by way of parenthesis, that Judas is, I think, very much misunderstood. Because he ended with such fearful sin, and then made matters worse by doubting God's power of forgiveness and hanging himself, we, for the most part, look upon him as utterly bad all through. Now, a moment's reflection will correct this mistake. Could Jesus possibly have taken a thoroughly bad man to be one of His chosen band of friends? Most certainly not. You may depend that when Jesus chose Judas Iscariot to be one of the twelve apostles he must have had a certain amount of good in him. But according to my reading of his character he was greedy of money, discontented, sulky, and jealous. These faults, uncorrected, led to his awful fall. He had sufficient good in him to make him ashamed of himself, which is more than every villain has; but the evil weeds had so grown up that they checked the growth of the sweet flower of repentance, and drove him to desperate remorse, ending in self-murder. How different from the impetuous Peter, who, when he was going to give his life for his Master, pleaded that he might be crucified head downwards because he was not worthy to die as Jesus had done!

These thoughts seem to you perhaps to be wandering far away from our crotchety children, and yet in reality they are not. We need to remember the future while we work in the present. You and I have the forming of the future mothers and fathers of England, and it is a responsibility which we must all realise.

The sulky children are, as a rule, the most unlovable and the most unloved of all, whereas they really, by their very nature, demand extra gentleness and love. If I remember rightly, there's a book on the treatment of children's bodily ailments, which tells us in very concise form what not to do, and then what to do for each.

With apologies to the author, I will adopt his plan as to this disease of mind and heart which we call sulkiness.

What Not to Do.

When a child begins to scowl, to press its lips firmly together, and to refuse to speak—

Do not scold.

Do not storm.

Do not smack or shake.

Do not talk at it, to some one else.

Don't announce your determination to break its will.

What to Do.

Begin your battle with the sulky fiend which torments your child very early, while it is still almost a baby. The will is weaker then, the heart more tender, and both can be touched more easily.

Put your arm round the little one and whisper, "Mother's so sorry that her own little boy has gone away. Will you look out of the window and watch for him to come back, and then call mother?" When the child is quite young I have seen that sort of treatment work wonders. Of course, I am taking for granted that I am speaking to loving mothers whose children would feel lost without their encouraging smiles and loving kisses. You must have love at the bottom of all your management, otherwise, although you may get the grudging obedience of a slave, you will never get the willing, self-sacrificing devotion of a loving child.

Put yourself in your child's place when he is in a sulky mood. The chances are ninety to one that he inherits his disposition from you or his father, and therefore it isn't his fault if he wants to be disagreeable when he is very tiny. Try to remember how you felt as a child. Don't you recollect the horrible choky feeling that you had when you wanted to be good, and knew that any advance on your part would only be met by reproaches for your naughtiness? Can't you feel now the real pain you had in your heart when you longed to put your arms round your mother's neck, and were told that you weren't fit to be kissed till you had said you were sorry?

Oh, mothers and fathers, teachers and nurses, that sort of treatment aggravates the sulkiness of a child. Can anything more opposite be imagined than this to the treatment which God gives to us, His erring children?

Watch for the first beam of brightness in the face of your sulky children, and be like the father in the parable—while they are yet a long way off, go to meet them.

Sulkiness is, I think, very often a form of aggravated sensitiveness. The sulky child is keenly alive to the least slight, the least injustice; moreover, he is greatly given to imagining things. You may be worried about some matter miles removed from him, but he sees the cloud on your face, he feels the far-away sound in your words, and he forthwith draws into his shell and sulks. The passionate child would probably ask you what was the matter, fling his arms round your neck and say you didn't love him a bit, he was quite sure of it; or he might, if he were bigger, do as I saw a passionate girl of twelve

do once, stamp up and down her room and say, "Mother doesn't love me; I'll run away and drown myself."

But the sulky child is slow to speak of what he feels, and so he shuts up his bitter feelings and his aching heart, and people think he doesn't care. You must encourage him to open his heart to you. Never laugh at the little molehills which he has magnified into mountains; troubles are very real to the little ones. It would be well for us all if we remembered this always in our dealings with them.

"He's only a child," we say, with a contemptuous look. Would to God we were all children in heart! "Only a child." Is that what Jesus meant when He took a little child and set him up as a pattern for the older folks to copy?

What ought a child to be? what is he if we let God's Holy Spirit work His will, and do our duty as parents?

His heart is as yet full of love to God and man; his mind is as yet untouched by doubt or the knowledge of evil; his soul is as yet spotless from stain of wilful sin. He is nearer to God than we are, my friends; let us do our best to keep him there.

"HUMDRUM WORK."

THE sacredness of so-called "humdrum work" is rapidly becoming a belief among women. And this new doctrine is being taught most generally by our literary women. There is hardly a gifted writer now but sees well to the ways of her own household. The inky, dishevelled Jellybys are dead, there being no place for such beings in this—the woman's century. There was a time when a writer wore short corkscrew curls, gnawed lead pencils, and gazed at the moon, leaving the common cares—sacred cares of home to those less gifted. Now our writers, by example as well as by pen, furnish a stimulus to the domesticated woman in her sweet task of making a well-ordered home.

It is written of George Eliot that "she was proud of being an excellent housekeeper, and nothing offended her more than the idea that because a woman had exceptionally intellectual powers therefore it was right that she should absolve herself or be absolved from ordinary household duties." It is comforting to know through her letters, that the writer of "Adam Bede" and "Romola" had "trouble with her jelly," and that to her moving was a sore trial. She says in one of her letters, "To me the most desirable thing seems to be to have our home, *and stay there* till death comes to take me away."

Once it was thought that literary women do not appreciate domestic trivialities, and devotion to books must be accompanied by a dislike and neglect of household enjoyments. But our best and most popular writers among women furnish examples of the fact that mental capacity does not preclude the understanding of the best ordering of life, and home-loving hearts go with strong brains. George Eliot saves her best colouring for her homely women, doing "humdrum work" faithfully day by day. She makes heroines of those who are striving to be "content with their middlingness."

"If I could write like ——," naming a popular writer, "I would not make my bed, or pick up a thing." So said a young girl who had attempted a little in authorship and failed. Just here she made a mistake. Because she scorned the simple home duties her little attempts at "household talks" fell flat. In the stories of the day the heroine we love and remember is not the woman who is marked off from the crowd by commanding gifts of intellect, but some patient, loving home-mother, whose life is full of hidden pathos and grandeur. As long as the world stands, and we need the gentle ministrations of home, eminent powers will pale before faithful love. And more and more shall we see that the unhappy and frivolous are the destroyers of home life; that the thoughtless and weak neglect home interests; and that to fill well one place in woman's kingdom we must fully believe in the sacredness of what some foolishly term "humdrum work."

MAY KINGSTON.

Helps for Busy Housewives.

GREASE SPOTS can be taken out of white marble by an application of whiting saturated with benzine. Let the coating remain on for a short time, and then wash off with soap and water. Another mixture to be used in the same way consists of two parts of washing soda and one part each of ground pumice-stone and chalk, all finely powdered, and mixed into a paste with water.

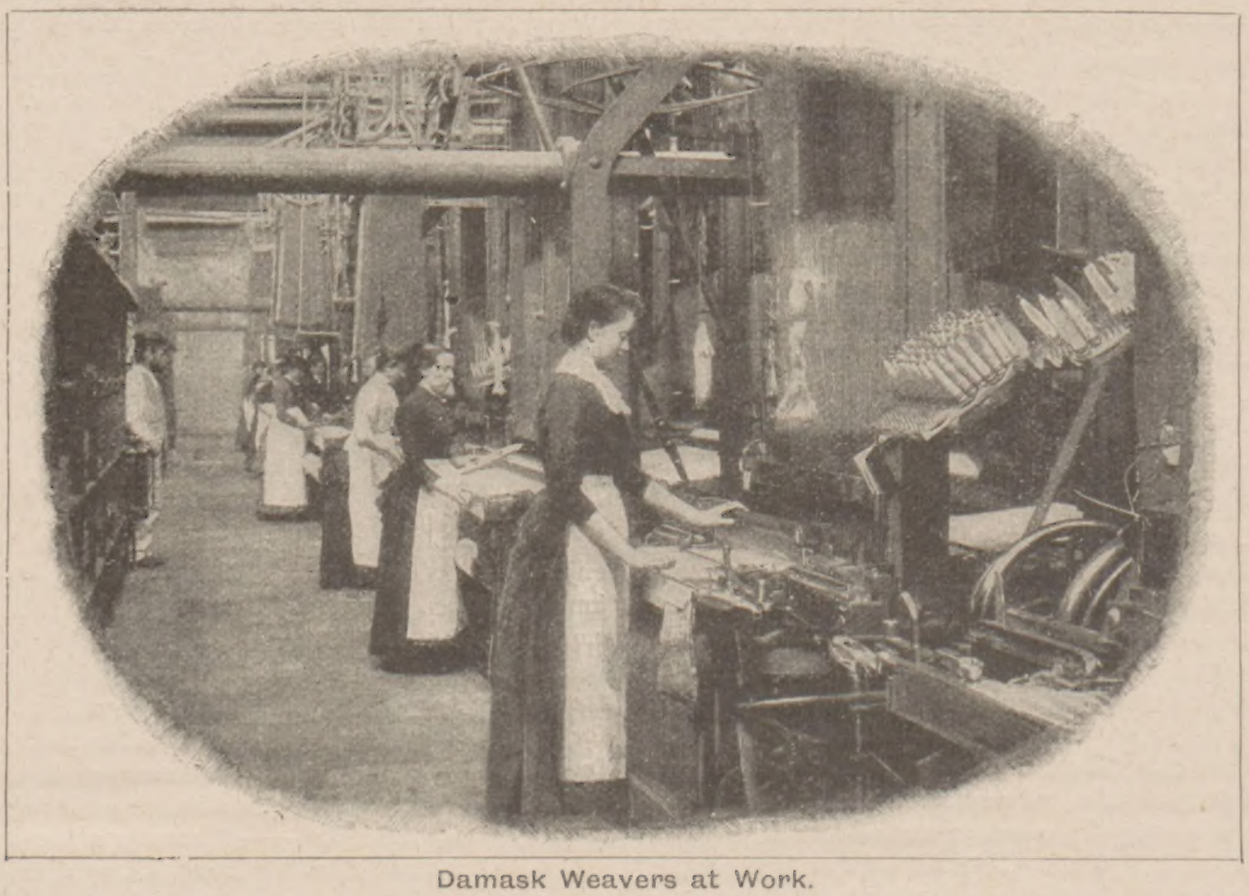
Table Linen.—In buying tablecloths and serviettes it is always best to get them of good quality. Not only will first-class material wear much longer, but it gives the table a richer appearance than an inferior quality of linen. Have plenty of changes, and never use a tablecloth or serviette until badly soiled, thereby necessitating severe rubbing to get it clean, and consequently much wear of the material.

Dusting.—Although to many people the dusting of a room is a very easy matter, to do this work well requires both time and patience. There is no part of the housework that is so often carelessly done, and there is no part that should be done so well. Some women who pose as excellent housewives are anything but thorough when dusting; they seem to think the time wasted that is spent in this work, and consequently hurry through it as fast as possible. With a feather duster or a cloth they switch off the dust, going from one thing to another, until all the articles are gone over; then the door is closed and the room is supposed to be in the best of order. On entering later in the day they are surprised to find the furniture covered with dust, and they wonder where all the dust comes from. If they would think awhile, they would surely know that the dust they switched into and about the room is bound to settle somewhere, and, of course, the furniture will get the largest share.

Boots and Shoes.—To buy and wear narrow, thin boots and shoes is worse than wasteful; it is tormenting to the wearer and risky to health. Comfort and proper protection should be aimed at.

Rice Biscuits.—Take equal quantities of sugar, ground rice, butter, flour, and their weight in eggs. Mix well, roll into a thin paste, cut into rounds with a wine-glass, and bake in a hot oven till a light brown.

Corsets.—A comfortable, neat corset is the acme of good dressing. Cheap, ill-fitting stays are a source of discomfort and mar the figure, and are really expensive in the end.



Damask Weavers at Work.

A NOTABLE IRISH INDUSTRY.

BY KATE M. MACARTNEY.

PERHAPS a more correct title than the one we have chosen for our article would be "*The* Notable Irish Industry"; for we suppose it will be generally conceded that the manufacture of linen, which is the subject of our present paper, takes first place amongst the industries of Ireland.

For many centuries real Irish linen has been rightly renowned for its quality and beauty. Whether used on the dining-table in the form of rich damask, or made into underclothing or the necessary pocket handkerchief, no woman who is fortunate enough to possess a stock of the material need fear as to its wear and utility. Yet probably few who prize the article think or know much of its making, so that a glance at its production in the Emerald Isle may prove interesting.

Let us first take a look backwards. In England, we are told, linen was first made in the year 1253. Then only the luxurious began to wear it, the generality of the people using woollen garments. In 1386 a company of weavers came over from the Netherlands and established their industry in London. Their goods were soon in great demand, and the trade rapidly increased, various improvements in the manufacture being made from time to time. Meanwhile the new material was attracting the attention of the people of Ireland; and as there seemed to be no difficulty in the growing of flax in their country, they commenced the manufacture of linen.

As usual, the heads of distinguished families were among the first to patronise so desirable an industry as linen-weaving, and we find men of title taking a personal practical interest in its development. Of these, Lord Strafford wisely and generously spent large sums of money in apparatus to deal with the flax in its raw state and in procuring looms. So deep was his interest that he even sent over to Amsterdam to secure the most improved looms obtainable, and these were distributed among such weavers as were likely to profit by their use.

But perhaps the greatest impetus to the industry was given by the immigration to the north of Ireland of a number of Huguenots. Driven out of France by religious persecution, these industrious workers settled down peacefully in their adopted country, bringing to their weaving a taste and skill quite unique. Louis Crommelin will long be remembered as a representative of these refugees, for not only had he a warm heart for the social condition of the people, but his efforts to ensure a high standard of linen manufacture were untiring. Indeed, down to the present day, in a district near Armagh known as one of Cromwell's "plantations," the descendants of these men work at their hand-looms, which are erected in rooms attached to their dwelling-houses.

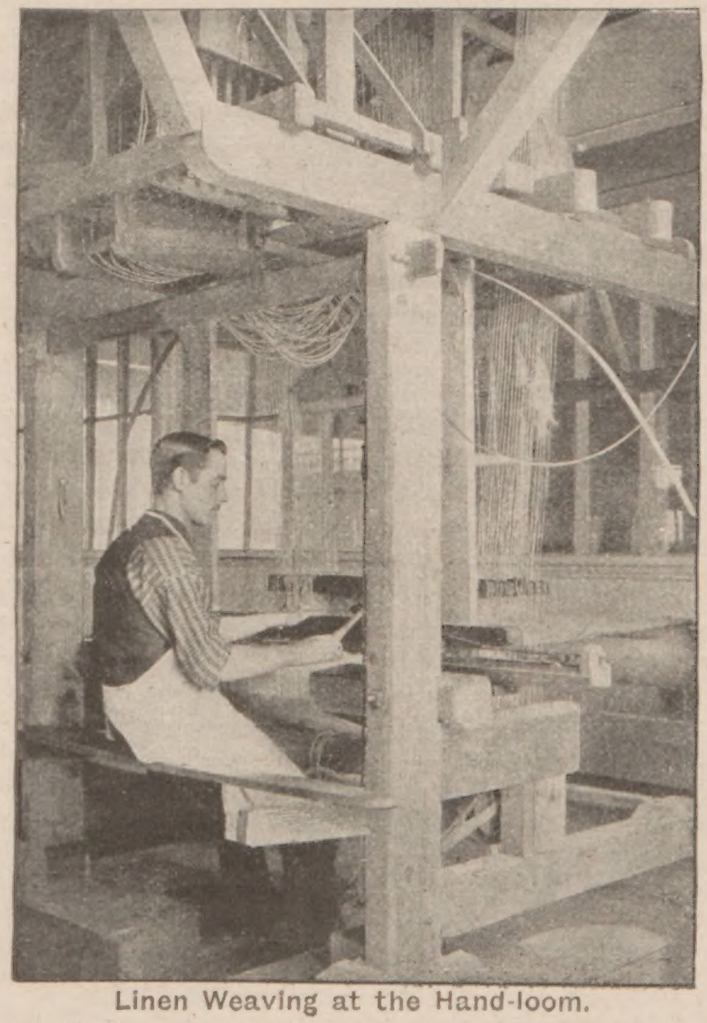
As may be supposed, hand-loom weaving is the oldest form of Irish linen making. In many a village and out-of-the-way place the single worker is still to be found. Entering his humble home and penetrating to the work-room, you may see him busy at his task, the shuttle flying from his skilful fingers as he replies to your inquiries. Very thrifty he must be in his home expenditure, for the work is not highly paid; nevertheless, by the growing of a few vegetables and the like, with the care of a pig or a cow, he manages to make both ends meet.

Unhappily, these home industries of Ireland, like

those of England, are more or less slowly decaying, although as we learn from Muggeridge's Report on the Linen Manufacture of Ireland in olden days, "the spinning of yarn by hand was the ordinary occupation of the females of almost every family in the province of Ulster connected with the linen weaving."

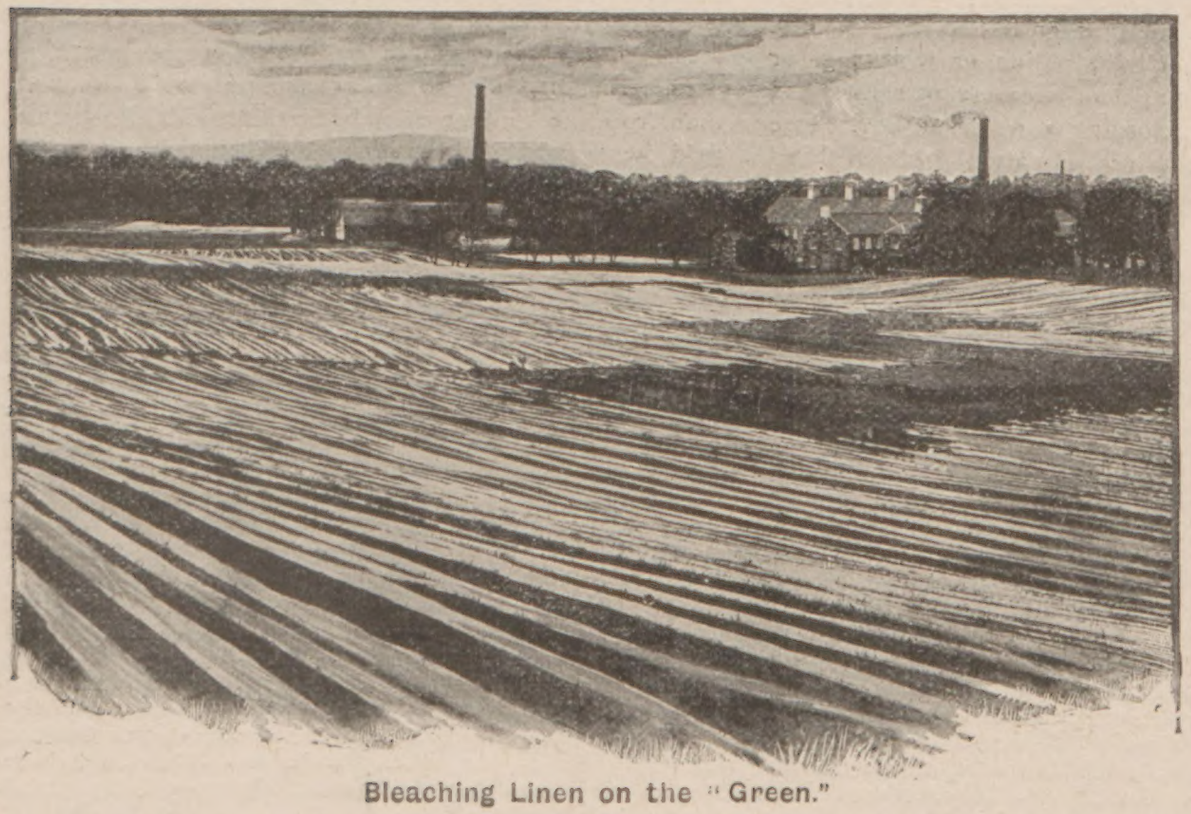
This decrease of hand-loom weaving means, of course, that in the large towns and elsewhere the huge mill is taking its place. With the application of steam and the wonderful advance of machinery, the manual competitor has small chance. And surpassing in mechanical interest is a visit to one of these same mills. Our first illustration gives a very clear idea of the process of damask weaving at St. Helen's Works, Belfast. On looking into the picture one cannot but be struck with the perfection to which the machinery connected with this industry has been brought at the present time.

But what we see is only one of the advanced processes of linen making. There is first the gathering in of the tender-hued flax, which covers the fields of Ulster to a degree not to be found in any other part of the Kingdom. Then it is sent to the mills, in many cases lofty structures several storeys high, containing capacious store-rooms and warehouses. Here it is combed and cleaned and sorted into its different qualities. The machines used in the stages of its manufacture into linen are varied, costly, and complicated, for it is no slight work which they have to perform. From "roughing" the flax and "heckling" to the "calendaring" of the webs, a series of wonderful changes is gone through. By most ingenious contrivances the raw material is pulled, straightened, wound, conducted, woven as warp or weft, and so perfected that it finally emerges as pure white linen or damask.



Linen Weaving at the Hand-loom.

A very interesting seat of the Irish linen trade is Bessbrook, which has been happily named "the Irish Saltaire." This model town is situated on the west side of the Great Northern Railway of Ireland, about seventy miles from Dublin, on the road to Belfast. Over a century ago it had, though then a very small village, a connection with the flax industry; but it did not rise into much prominence until Messrs. Richardson, of Belfast, established a large flax mill at the place, more than forty years ago. This firm determined to take advantage of the seclusion of the spot to place their workpeople in a position in which they would, while enjoying the pure air of the country, be free from the contamination of town vices.



Bleaching Linen on the "Green."

Other places in which linen making is carried on are Lisburn, and especially Belfast, the centre of the linen industry. Here can be seen not only the huge warehouses and offices of the makers and merchants, along with the well-known Linen Hall, but also the retail establishments, which are among the finest buildings of the great capital.

But over a very

wide area of the north of Ireland are visible the signs of its famous linen trade. From Larne to Lurgan the manufacture thrusts itself on the attention by its tall chimneys and square-shaped mills; and, as a recent writer says, "nothing strikes the traveller more frequently than the sight of Ulster's fields whitened with the linen put out to bleach. Here and there are long, broad lines of white spread on grass that is of the greenest, and the interlacing lines of emerald and of white suggest huge ribbons stretching in parti-coloured beauty on the earth." A novel sight, truly, and one not soon forgotten. Indeed, we may say that in the employment of thousands of men and women workers, in the amount of money invested, and in the picturesqueness of its surroundings, the linen industry is one of the special features of Ulster.

SOUL OR STOMACH?

IT has been said that a man's opinions are ruled by the shape of his head, and his emotions by the state of his stomach. The latter half of this dictum is especially true in the case of young children. The days are passed wherein pettishness, or fretfulness, or loss of appetite for the morning bowl of bread-and-milk was cured by a visit to the family in the garret, who subsisted, in cheerful gratitude, on charity crusts and cold potatoes. But it is possible that some parents—generally among the more earnest-minded and conscientious—still feel it their duty to meet and fight certain of their children's faults on moral ground when they really belong to the domain of the physical.

Many years ago there used to be frequently appearing in family magazines a mother of anecdotal fame, who made it a rule, when any of her young people displayed peevishness or irritability, to lose no time in administering a dose of medicine, with the result that peace and good humour reigned in her household. Many of those who read this familiar anecdote praised the astuteness of the mother; others laughed at the supposed artfulness of the children, who, it was considered, suppressed any exhibition of ill-temper because of the penalty it evoked. Few, we fancy, understood the scheme to be anything but an instance of maternal tact. We believe it to have been an example of unusual common-sense.

We are acquainted with a mother to-day who, whenever her little son is fractious or fretful, administers, instead of the old-fashioned scolding, or whipping, or banishment to bed, a draught of effervescent saline, and Johnnie wakes up next morning a different boy. She knows that a child who is well, is naturally cheerful and good humoured, and that peevishness and ill-temper frequently arise from a disordered stomach or overheated blood.

Again, in the matter of indolence. We believe that many growing boys and girls, especially the latter, are chidden for laziness when really suffering from the inertia of weak health. Young people who are bubbling over, as they should be, with exuberance of vitality, who "feel their life in every limb," are not likely to be accused of "dreaminess" or "creepiness" or "leaning and lolling about." To be constantly spurring these bigger offenders beyond their strength by sharp words, when extra nourishment, more fresh air, or a tonic is needed, is no less mistaken and cruel than by punishment to goad a younger one into a paroxysm of passion when suffering from the physical irritation of disordered stomach or nerves.

We do not for a moment wish to deny that there is a moral and spiritual side to these things. Ill-temper and sloth, as well as other tendencies to evil, must be met and conquered. Even young children must be taught self-control. But let us make sure first of all that the origin of the evil *is* in the moral nature. We adults are ready enough at all times to allege that our indifferent health or overwrought nervous system is responsible for sundry omissions or commissions which the careless observer might be disposed to attribute to other causes. Let us be willing to concede like indulgence to the little ones, and not expect from them higher virtues and greater nobility of character than we ourselves are able to exhibit. On the other hand, of no one are children more likely to learn patience under suffering, the victory over crossness, or the power of persevering industry even against natural inclination, than from the mother who is familiar with the battlefield herself, and whose headaches, they know, never make her the less gentle or just, and who is never too tired to uncomplainingly render for them every loving service their youth and weakness need.

JENNIE CHAPPELL.

Healthy Laughter.—Chavasse, an eminent surgeon, says: "Encourage your child to be merry and to laugh aloud; a good hearty laugh expands his chest, and makes his blood bound merrily along. Commend me to a good laugh—not to a little sniggering laugh, but to one that will sound through the house; it will do your child real good."

* * * *

Gossip.—How apt we are to gossip, and how quickly gossip degenerates into scandal! We all acknowledge that we are more apt to speak of the faults of our fellow-creatures than of their virtues; and yet how much better it would be to think and speak of the good! How often, not meaning any real harm, we exaggerate some fault of a person until it assumes the proportions of a vice! We pass on and straightway forget what we have said; but what of the hearer? Does she forget likewise? Not always. The words we spoke without intending harm often work incalculable injury. How heedful, then, we should be of our words and of our thoughts! "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt," is a wise caution for all.

* * * *

John Ruskin's Early Training.—The great author thus speaks of his early training: "My mother never gave me more to learn than she knew I could easily get learnt, if I set myself honestly to work, by twelve o'clock. She never allowed anything to disturb me when my task was set. If it was not said rightly by twelve o'clock, I was kept in till I knew it; and in general, even when Latin grammar came to supplement the Psalms, I was my own master for at least an hour before dinner at half-past one, and for the rest of the afternoon. My mother herself, finding her chief pleasure in her flowers, was often planting or pruning beside me—at least, if I chose to stay beside *her*. I never thought of doing anything behind her back which I would not have done before her face."

WOMEN OF WORTH.

IV.—LOUISA M. ALCOTT, THE MOTHER OF "LITTLE WOMEN."

BY CHARLOTTE SKINNER.

MOST of our readers are probably acquainted with Louisa Alcott through her delightful stories. Not only, however, was she a charming writer. She was also a truly good woman—the most devoted of daughters, the kindest of sisters, and the staunchest of friends. Indeed, in every sense of the word she was a woman of worth; and we feel sure the following brief sketch of her life will be welcome to numbers of readers who have previously known her only through her books.

Louisa Alcott was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, on Nov. 29th, 1832; but when only two years old, her father, who was a schoolmaster, removed to Boston, and that place became through all her life her favourite abode. Both the father and mother had very wise ideas as to the training of their children, and induced them all to write as much as possible; each kept a diary, and very often little letters passed between the mother and her daughters.

Louisa May Alcott

Three things which stood Louisa Alcott in good stead in after life were entered into heartily while yet a child—walking, housework, and sewing. During one of her long walks, just at dawn, while watching the sun rise through an arch of trees, she "got religion" as she termed it. The child's heart was drawn out to God, and though there was never any great display of her religion, *she lived it*. Of a hasty, impetuous nature, her early days filled with difficulties, few lives present a more Christ-like spirit.

Some years of her girlhood were spent in the country, part of the time being full of employment, and part clouded by poverty; but eventually the family returned to Boston, where the mother worked as a kind of Bible-woman. The father gave lessons or lectured, and the girls taught and did needlework.

Now began Louisa's real struggles. She had set before herself a definite purpose—"to retrieve the fortunes of the family, and to give to her mother the ease which she had never known in her married life." How was this to be accomplished? She went out to service, and had two months of disappointment and painful experience, which, years after, she recounted in a story called "How I went out to Service." After that she kept faithfully to her plain sewing and teaching till she found how to use her pen. Some may think the time wasted as the busy fingers plied the shining needle, but meanwhile the active brain was weaving all sorts of stories which were afterwards to delight millions of readers. It was her training time; poverty, toil, and disappointment were her *writing-masters*. Almost all her books are simply her own experience in new settings. But none of these "hard-rubbings" tamed her bright, fun-loving nature.

She got her first little story published when she was sixteen, and she received five dollars for it. From that time for several years she continued teaching, sewing, and writing, and all the money she earned, after paying her own small expenses, was sent faithfully home.

When her stories came to be in greater demand, she took a "sky-parlour" in Boston, and there, quietly to herself, "spun her fascinating yarns." This was always her favourite place for work, even after she became famous. In her diary she writes: "I am in the garret with my papers round me, and a pile of apples to eat while I write my journal, plan stories, and enjoy the patter of rain on the roof." Does not that remind us of Jo's sky-parlour in "Little Women"?

One of her early stories, called "Moods," was written at home, her parents being back again into the country. Here is a description of the authoress at work: "Mother made me a green silk cap with a red bow, to match the old green and red party wrap, which I wore as a 'glory cloak.' Thus arrayed, I sat in groves of manuscript. Mother wandered in and out with cups of tea, and father brought his reddest apples."

While at work on this same book she writes to her sister: "I feel very moral to-day, having done a big wash, baked, swept the house, picked the hops, got dinner, and written a chapter in 'Moods.' It is dreadfully dull, and I work that I may not 'brood.' If I think of my woes, I fall into a vortex of debts, dishpans, and despondency awful to see. So I say 'every path has its puddle,' and try to play gaily with the tadpoles in my puddle while I wait for the Lord to give me a lift, or some gallant Raleigh to spread his velvet cloak and fetch me over dry-shod."

When the book was at last accepted, she notes in her journal: "I sat hammering away at the parlour carpet—dusty, dismal, and tired, when a letter came proposing to bring the book out at once. Of course we all had a rapture, and I finished my work double quick."

During the civil war she spent three months as a nurse, but had to be brought home ill with fever. Her letters home during this time formed the foundation of a book called "Hospital Sketches," which was really her first popular work. She was then asked to write a girl's story, and although preferring boys as her audience, she consented; and after the subject had simmered a little while in her mind, she decided to write a story which would be largely founded on the experience of her own family. When it was written she said, "We really lived most of it, and if it succeeds, that will be the reason of it." We all know how "Little Women"—for that was the story—did succeed, and the famous book was soon translated into French, German, and Dutch.

She was now able to pay all her parents' debts, providing everything necessary for their comfort, and then she set off on a trip to Europe. While there, news came of the death of her brother-in-law, and she at once wrote the story, "Little Men," in order to find means to help her widowed sister.

Then the great mental strain borne for so many years began to tell upon her. In reference to the story of "The Old-fashioned Girl," she says: "I wrote it with left hand in a sling, one foot up, head aching, and no voice. Yet, as the book is funny, people will say, 'Didn't you enjoy doing it?' I often think of poor Tom Hood as I scribble, rather than lie and groan. I certainly earn my living by the sweat of my brow." A few years afterwards come the words, "No sleep without morphine." One of her brightest and sweetest stories, "Under the Lilacs," was written during her mother's fatal illness, and while she was very ill herself.

On March 6th, 1888, within twenty-four hours of her father's death, she passed quietly to rest. Her last written words were, "Slow climbing, but I don't slip back, so think up my mercies, and sing cheerfully, as dear Marmee used to do, 'Thus far the Lord hath led me on!'" Her last piece of work was a garment for a poor child—a fitting end to a life which had from girlhood been spent for others.

"AS A LITTLE CHILD."

THE storm was past, and o'er the hills
The golden sunbeams softly fell,
And birds with merry chirps and trills,
Made music through each shady dell.
I loitered on with clouded brow,
And watched the raindrops trembling bright
On every swaying leaf and bough
Like jewels, wrought and shaped in light.

But sorrow watched within my heart,
Nor could I trust my Father's will;
I feared the fray, the wound, the smart,
And feeling helpless, struggled still.
"I'm like yon child who stands dismayed,
And fears to cross the streamlet o'er;
Her foot might slip, poor, doubting maid!
Then who would bear her to the shore?"

And murmuring thus, I reached her side.
She raised sweet eyes, undimmed with fear,
And pointing towards the swollen tide,
Said: "I will go, now you are here."
She smiled, then bravely turned to cross,
But paused to place her hand in mine;
Confiding trust—the waves might toss,
But she was safe through faith divine.

My doubts were scattered swift and far:
"Thus holding to my Father's hand,
I'll trust His word, though mountains bar
The path I tread at His command."
The child glanced up in swift surprise.
"And is your father near?" she said.
I stooped to kiss her puzzled eyes,
And ask a blessing on her head.

MAY M. ANDERSON.

A CURE FOR TIRED MOTHERS.

THE average woman does not sleep enough; and that is why she finds herself growing fretful and irritable, a prey to nervous disorders. The increase of these troubles of the nerves is positively alarming; they are real troubles too, and not imaginary, as some persons like to believe. Happily, the alleviation is, in many cases, in the sufferer's own hands; whilst those women who as yet have not succumbed may prevent the mischief by simply taking more sleep. Many a woman will plead that she hasn't time to lie down for a few minutes in the daytime; and she will infringe upon the hours of the night, which should be given to sound, healthy, needed sleep, in order to finish some piece of work which could as well be completed on the morrow. Often, too, she will rush and hurry all day long; and then, when the household is hushed in slumber at night, she will sit up to read some paper, thinking she will not have to pay for the time she is stealing from the health-giving sleep that comes before midnight.

A physician, who is a specialist in nervous disorders, says that women should sleep at least eight hours at night and one hour in the daytime. Some women insist that they cannot sleep by daylight; but if they persist every day in closing the eyes at a regular time, slumber will come, and rest to the nerves will follow.

Secrets of Health.—Don't worry. Don't hurry. "Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow." Simplify! Don't overeat. Don't starve. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." Court the fresh air day and night. Sleep and rest abundantly. Spend less nervous energy each day than you make. Be cheerful. "A light heart lives long." Think only healthful thoughts. "Seek peace and pursue it." Work well, but don't be worked to death. Avoid passion and excitement. A moment's anger may destroy a lifetime of goodness. Associate with healthy people. Don't carry the whole world on your shoulders. Trust the Eternal. Never despair. Lost hope is a fatal disease.

LOVE CONQUERS ALL.

BY EDITH C. KENYON, AUTHOR OF "HILDA; OR, LIFE'S DISCIPLINE," ETC.

"BUT, Everard, I want to go so much."

"Ethel dear, how can I get on without you?"

"You got on well enough before we were married."

"Ah, but that was different."

"But it is only for two months, and it will be so pleasant. I want to go."

"I shall be unhappy without you, Ethel, I am sure."

"Nonsense! Two months will soon pass, and then I shall return."

"But I cannot spare you. I cannot." The husband's tone was full of grief.

"Nonsense! You can. I must go. I must."

"You must not. I won't allow it. I won't hear of it!"

"Everard!" The young wife's cheeks flushed. He had never before spoken to her in that tone.

"I mean it. You shall not go."

"I *shall*." Ethel's tone was low, but determined.

Everard Duncan looked with a feeling of despair at his beautiful young wife. Her friends had warned him before he had married her that she had been a spoilt child, and was by birth and training totally unfit to be a poor man's wife. But she loved him, and he believed this love would enable her to overcome her self-will. They had been married six months, and at first all went well. Never once did Ethel complain of missing the luxuries and refinements of the beautiful home from which he took her. Bravely did she bear the discomforts and difficulties of comparative poverty. Cheerfully did she set her strong young will to prove that those who prophesied that "love in a cottage" would be for her a failure were entirely wrong.

"'Everard,' she said, 'forgive me.'" *p.* 94.

But, now, some wealthy cousins had invited her to go abroad with them for a couple of months, promising to pay all her expenses, and the temptation to Ethel Duncan was a great one. Secretly, in her inmost soul, she had grown weary of the quietness and frugality which reigned within her and Everard's home. Everard was wrapped up in his profession. He was a rising young architect; and, possessing great perseverance and untiring industry, he "slaved," as Ethel called it, at his work, regardless of health and pleasure. It was a pity Ethel had not a profession too, Everard thought sometimes, when he saw that her little round of household duties did not arouse much interest in her mind, and that the time which flew so fast for him dragged by on leaden wings for her. And then, loving her dearly as he did, he would try to take her somewhere, or plan some little pleasure for her, which sorely hindered him in his work; but he felt amply repaid when he looked into her fair young face, and noticed the glad light shining in her blue eyes, and the pretty flush of pleasure on her cheeks.

He rejoiced in the strength of her will when shown in her opposition to those who opposed her union with him, and in her determination to cheerfully endure a poorer life for his sake. But now he was by no means glad when she displayed the same strength of will in determining to leave him for a couple of months that she might go abroad with her rich cousins, and Everard tried in vain to dissuade her. Perhaps he was a trifle selfish, but then it seemed to him that her going would completely break up their little home. She wished him to let the house, and go into rooms for a couple of months, regardless of the inconvenience it

would be to him to leave his study, where he drew his architectural plans and where he had all that would assist him in his art ready to hand.

Selfish was he? Ah! but she was more selfish. And he recognised it, with keen pain, one day when, on returning home, he found her gone. All she had left him was a small three-cornered note, in which was written :—

"Good-bye, Everard, for two months. You must manage as well as you can. The time will soon pass, and then I shall return.—Your loving wife, ETHEL."

She had disobeyed him—she, who promised to obey him and be his own true wife! Her heart was hard and cold; she cared little for his welfare, and much for her own pleasure. Everard was very unhappy. All that night be sat up in his study, thinking sad, despairing thoughts. Had she ever loved him? Did she care for him at all? *He* could never have left her. She had professed to love him, but how light and evanescent her feelings must have been compared with his! She disobeyed him, and then, like a spoilt child, expected him to forgive her and receive her back, just as if nothing had happened. But he loved her. And he scouted the temptation which came to him presently, to harden his heart against her and determine not to receive her back. Could it be of Ethel, his own beautiful, beloved Ethel, that such a thought presented itself!

"Oh, God, forgive me," he said in his much-tried heart—"forgive me, and give me my wife again."

As he was having his breakfast he received a telegram from Oakhurst Hall, the abode of Ethel's cousins—

"I repent. Come for me.—ETHEL."

That was all; but it was enough for Everard. Within two hours' time he stood at the great door of Oakhurst Hall, twenty miles away.

"Well, Duncan! Come for your wife, have you?" cried Cecil Grainger, the squire, shaking hands heartily. "Take off your overcoat; you must stay all day now we have got you. No time! Oh, but I want to do a little business with you. I want you to build me a church on my property. From what Ethel says, you will do it splendidly. And we must discuss the plans."

Everard thanked him with glad eyes, which, however, roamed restlessly in search of Ethel.

"Ah, I see you want Ethel," said his host. "Ethel, Ethel!" he called at the foot of the grand staircase.

A door in the corridor upstairs opened, and Ethel appeared, with a little cry of joy.

Cecil Grainger stepped back into the library, and Everard ascended the stairs, two steps at a time, in all haste to reach his wife.

A joyous light shone in her face, and, resting her elbows upon the broad balustrade of the landing, she looked down on the man she loved.

"Everard," she said, "forgive me. I was wrong in disobeying you and in thinking I could enjoy my liberty again when that liberty meant severance from you. I have been *so* unhappy; I never slept all night. And this morning I confessed to Cousin Mab that I was joining them against your will, and she and Cecil were grieved and lectured me most dreadfully. Cecil said you would never forgive me; but if you did and came for me on receipt of that telegram you were one in a thousand, and he would try to help you on in your profession. And I knew you would forgive me and come, because—because, Everard, you love me, and *love conquers all.*"

"Am I to understand," said Everard, standing still, and holding up his hand to emphasise his words—"am I to understand, Ethel, that you will give up the tour, and leave your grand friends and return to our cottage home?"

"Yes, yes!" she cried, quite eagerly, looking at him with trusting love.

"And you won't regret giving up those things for which you hankered?"

"No, no!" she cried, and now her tones were tremulous with joy. "I shall not regret them, Everard, because I love you—*and love conquers all.*"

* * * * *

Cecil Grainger kept his promise to advance the interests of his cousin's husband by every means in his power. The church Everard built for him was so beautiful that many other wealthy men desired his services. The young architect is now rich enough to take Ethel abroad every year, and to give her very many other innocent and delightful enjoyments, and they are a very happy and united couple, for their wills are never known to clash.

LOWLY FIDELITY.

A TENDER and beautiful story of lowly faithfulness is told by a late writer. It was on one of the Orkney Islands where a great rock—Lonely Rock—dangerous to vessels, juts out into the sea. In a fisherman's hut on this island coast one night long ago sat a young girl, busy at her spinning-wheel, looking out upon the dark and driving clouds. All night she toiled and watched, and when morning came one fishing-boat—her father's—was missing. Half a mile from the cottage her father's body was found washed upon the shore. His boat had been wrecked on Lonely Rock.

The girl watched her father's body, after the manner of her people, till it was laid in the grave. Then when night came she arose and set a light in her casement, that the fishermen out on the waves might see. All night long she sat in the little room spinning, trimming the light when its rays grew dim. After that, in the wild storms of winter, in the quiet, calm summer, through driving mists, illusive moonlight, and solemn darkness that coast was never one night without the brightness of that one little beacon. As many hanks of yarn as she had spun before for her daily bread she spun still, and many more to pay for her nightly light.

The men on the sea, often far out, were sure always of seeing that quiet light shining to give them safe guidance. Who can tell how many hearts were cheered and lives saved from peril and death by that tiny flame which love and devotion and self-sacrifice kept there through the long years?—*J. R. Miller, D.D.*

MOTHERS IN COUNCIL.

CONDUCTED BY MRS. E. M. WATERWORTH, AUTHOR OF "MOTHERS AT HOME," ETC.

June 1st, 1895.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Some of you have, I am afraid, been thinking very hard things of me, because I have not answered your letters. How can I do so when you will not let me know where to write? Do please, all of you, try to remember that each letter of inquiry must be accompanied by a stamped directed envelope.

I am sadly afraid poor "ANXIOUS MOTHER" has been vexed with me for not replying to her question about Ringworm, but there was only the signature "Frances" and the post mark "Peckham Rye" to guide me. Even the most enlightened of postmen could not have found the needle in that pottle of hay, I fear. I am really very sorry, for I know a splendid remedy for this disease, and I am afraid it may come too late. Never mind, it may be of use to some one else; so here it is.

First, if there be only one spot on the head, cut the hair quite short for a little distance beyond the spot. If there be several places, then it will be wiser to have the head shaved at once. Wash the head every morning with carbolic or any superfatted soap to be obtained at the chemist's, dry it well, rub the spot with your finger with turpentine till the child says it stings, then paint the spot immediately with iodine.

In the evening apply iodine only, without washing the head. Remember that directly after the treatment the towel and your hands must be washed in some disinfectant. Continue the treatment till the child complains of the head feeling tender, then give him a holiday for a few days and begin again. Take care to feed the child well, not forgetting to give him plenty of sausages if the weather will permit. I shall be happy to give more minute directions to any one who may need them for this tiresome complaint.

* * * *

Oh! dear "VIOLET," why did you not send an envelope? By the time you read this, your difficulty will have solved itself and the crochet petticoat will have retired from public life for a time. Never mind, summer will pass and for most of us winter will come again, so I will answer you. A woollen petticoat, whether of crochet or knitting, should, I think, be worn right side out of the work, and also outside of the flannel petticoat.

As to "refreshing black straw hats," "VIOLET" will find a recipe on page 42 of the March number of this Magazine which may be of use to her; but in case it should involve too much fuss, I may as well add that if I wanted to make a black straw hat look as good as new, with as little trouble as possible, I should proceed as follows:—First I should sponge it with very little lukewarm water. When dry I should rub it carefully with a mixture of ink and gum Arabic. Even the well-known satin polish is also a very useful thing to renovate black straw.

* * * *

By the time this letter sees daylight the little arrangement which I have been able to work out for "LAURAGH" in the Emerald Isle will be in full swing. I earnestly hope it may be satisfactory to all parties, and that they may have cause to bless "Mothers in Council." Many thanks to all who have so kindly congratulated us on our new page. Your words are very cheering, but don't let your kindness end in words—carry it a little further, and get your friends to take in our magazine, if only for the sake of sending a puzzler to me.

* * * *

"OLD NURSE" is in a state of constant trouble because she cannot prevent the sponges getting nasty. If she will be careful to rinse them out every day and put them in the air to dry, she will, in a great measure, *prevent* the sliminess she dislikes. If she will hang the sponges up by a bit of string till they are perfectly dry (it will take two or three whole days or more to accomplish this), and then shake and beat them well, she will find the dirt fly out of them. Then wash them well in borax and warm water, to *cure* the sliminess.

* * * *

I wonder how many pennies "R. D." has gained by this time! "R. D." was anxious to help in missionary work, so she wrote to ask me how to begin with a solitary penny. In case any of you may wish to follow her good example, I will give one or two directions.

Get a halfpennyworth of walnuts, cut them open without cracking the shells, and take out the nut. Get a halfpennyworth of bran, and then make little pincushions by glueing the shells together, with any odd scrap of ribbon or silk between, to stick the pins in. Pretty daisies can be made from the petal-shaped bones inside the skull of the whiting. Twist some wire for stalks, put a lump of sealing-wax at one end, and stick the petals round in it. Many other ways will occur to you of increasing a penny till it becomes perhaps half-a-sovereign. And are not the little gifts often the most pleasing to God? It was the widow's mite that gained the blessing of the all-observant Saviour.

* * * *

My dear little "HOPE," do not be discouraged. I fancy you must be young as yet by the tone of your letter, and I am quite certain you are in earnest. You long for active work for God, and yet you cannot do it without breaking up the home life. What are you to do? Follow the Master, who waited patiently thirty years before He began His public ministry.

Do not be deceived into thinking that the duty of the home should be neglected or shifted on someone else's shoulders, while *you* go out into the highways and hedges to preach to others. Be patient and loyal to your parents and your God. Look out for the little every-day duties, and offer them up to God as you pray to be allowed to serve Him in greater things. The way will be opened for you by-and-by perhaps, and you will be able to help others better, through having borne the yoke of unselfishness in your youth.

Your faithful friend,

E. M. Waterworth

HINTS ON HOME DRESSMAKING.

BY A PRACTICAL DRESSMAKER.

DURING the summer season there is nothing nicer for children's dresses than a washing cotton material. Every time they are washed they seem new, whilst the cost is quite nominal. The only drawback is the labour incurred in washing and ironing. But even this is minimised now-a-days by the fast dark-coloured cottons, which keep clean quite a long time, and the crinkled crepons which require so little ironing. For new dresses our readers will find exquisite patterns and colours in crepons, sateen, and drill. The last mentioned is nice and firm, and can be used with advantage for sailor blouses for both boys and girls. A navy-blue serge skirt made on a calico body will be very useful for seaside or school wear, and can be used with either a sailor or other shaped blouse.

Fig. 19.

Ladies are wearing what is called a pouch-shaped bodice. For children above the age of ten this style is very becoming. Younger children will wear blouse dresses made on a yoke, and trimmed with frills, gathers, or bretelles. Ladies will wear blouse bodices on almost all occasions, and there are endless varieties both in style and material.

Dress sleeves are still worn very full, but are not at all raised on the shoulders. Many of them are draped with rosettes, bows, and buttons; the fulness being sometimes gathered along the length in the middle, and fastened at the shoulder with a strap or bow. In one sense they resemble the dress skirt, both being wide in one part and suddenly diminishing into a tight fit in the other. Skirts are extremely wide at the bottom.

Fig. 19. We show here a lady's dress, suitable for making in delaine or sateen. The skirt is moderately full and is fitted to the figure in front, while the back is laid in pleats. A trimming of contrast material, lace, or silk can be used round the bottom and up the side of the skirt. The body does not reach below the waist, and is finished with a point in front. It opens over a front and collarette of pleated silk. The revers reach from the waist in front, and are taken over the shoulders to form a collar at the back. (It will be necessary to place a piece of stiff muslin between the lining and the material.) They are edged with a narrow lace. The sleeve is arranged in a double puff, drawn in with a band of lace or ribbon. We are glad to find that linenette for skirt linings is now made in double width, which will cut to more advantage and also save work in joining up the seams.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 20. This is a pretty summer outfit for a little maid from five to eight years of age. There is a plain bell skirt lined throughout. Then the body is made over a fitting lining, and the material is set on full, being gathered at the neck, on the shoulders, and also at the waist. Over this there are little coat fronts, something like the short Eton jacket, and turned back at the neck with a rever. There is a deep pleated band of the material, finished with a rosette, at the side. The full sleeves are drawn into a cuff at the wrist. The hat worn with this dainty little dress has a drawn silk crown and a lace brim, which is supported by silk wire threaded through the lace. Ribbon bows trim the side.

Fig. 21.

Fig. 22.

Fig. 21. This dress is suitable for a little "tot" from two to three years of age. The pattern will answer very well for a washing dress, and will not require lining. There must be a deep hem at the bottom, and a few narrow tucks above. The skirt is set into a yoke, which must be lined. This yoke is nearly covered with a frill, which is set on round the neck, and is about three inches deep. Lace or embroidery might be used with washing material. A short puff sleeve completes the little dress.

Fig. 22. Here we have a pattern for an older girl, but still made on a yoke. There are a variety of materials, either in cotton or woollen, which would be suitable for a dress of this sort. The skirt can be trimmed or tucked and gathered or pleated into the yoke, finished with a rosette of ribbon on either side. A frill about six inches deep is used to ornament the shoulders. The puffed sleeve is set into a deep cuff at the wrist. This pattern will do admirably for wearing without a jacket, as the shoulder frills give it a finished appearance.

Flat patterns can be supplied. Figs. 19, 20, 21, and 22, 6½d. each. Address "M.C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.